STRATEGIC
PLAN 2012

THE GEORGE
WASHINGTON
UNIVERSITY
WASHINGTON DC

FROM THE CHIEF INFORMATION OFFICER

Dear Colleagues,

The George Washington University (GW) is an institution that has, since its creation, forged a distinct path to academic excellence. George Washington, the university's namesake, envisioned a university that would draw young people from all parts of the country and educate them in the arts, sciences, politics and government. The Division of Information Technology (IT) strives to provide the highest-quality support and services to our constituents—students, faculty, staff, researchers and alumni—and partner with university stakeholders to position the university as a model institution for the collaboration between higher education and technology.

Information technology is one of the most central tools in today's higher education environment. From the first time prospective students and families access the university's website to the many ways our faculty use technology to enhance their academic plans, technology pervades every aspect of the George Washington University and the world at large. Technology is crucial in enabling the seamless operation of daily university functions, and its availability, adaptability and mobility can help to propel an institution to the top of its class.

As critical a tool as IT is in today's environment, however, it is still just that, and it relies on the people that make up the Division of IT to ensure it is used in the most efficient and effective ways on a daily basis. It is our hope that this document will provide a comprehensive plan for the development and future direction of information technology at GW. It articulates the themes and principles by which the division strives to adhere in order to be the best possible provider of IT services and support and a true strategic partner at the university.

The strategic plan my staff and I have created illustrates the direction we feel the Division of IT is going, and it highlights the crucial culture change occurring within the division. Over the past several years, the division has engaged in a dramatic shift from a culture which necessarily viewed technology as a potential barrier from accomplishing desired initiatives to a one that provides a foundation for innovation, calculated risk and competitive strategy.

In discussing standardization of the IT landscape, one becomes aware of a number of implications, both positive and negative, in making a shift toward a more standardized IT unit. As less "things" are supported by an organization, for example, the IT environment becomes less complex. The Division of IT believes that the benefits of standardization, which include the enforcement of good management and assessment practices across an organization, far outweigh any negative implications.

This strategic plan is a living document, which will be regularly visited, assessed and adapted as IT trends and the university's needs evolve and change. We feel that this plan embodies the Division of IT's culture and the university's values and believe it will assure institutional adaptability and technology competitiveness for GW's future.

Thank you,

David Steinour
Chief Information Officer

MISSION

The Division of IT promotes, advances and supports teaching, learning, research and administrative operations for the GW community by providing collaborative and innovative technology services and solutions.

VISION

A trusted partner and leader that facilitates and drives innovative technology services and solutions as GW emerges as a preeminent research institution and continues its tradition as a world-class university.

VALUES

Learning
Communication
Community
Diversity

Excellence
Sustainability
Teamwork

TRENDS → CORE PRINCIPLES

- Consumerization of IT
- Need for Standardization, Commoditization and Prioritization of IT Environment

People

Technology and Tools

Process

STRATEGIC THEMES AND ACTIONS

MOVE TOWARDS BEING A SERVICE ORGANIZATION
- Define and promote our services
- Improve training and outreach

LOWER OPERATION SPENDING
- Standardize
- Develop standardized platforms for services

LISTEN TO SERVICE USERS AND BUILD RELATIONSHIPS
- Understand the experience of our service users
- Improve feedback processes and practices

LEAD THE MOBILITY EXPECTATIONS FOR THE UNIVERSITY
- Improve mobile access
- Engage in outreach

INCREASE ORGANIZATIONAL AGILITY
- Partner internally and externally
- Improve preparedness and response

ESTABLISH CONTINUOUS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT
- Invest in training and growth
- Track staff progress and accomplishment
- Improve recognition and advancement programs

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The George Washington University (GW) was created in 1821 through an act of Congress, fulfilling George Washington's vision of an institution in the nation's capital dedicated to educating and preparing future leaders. Today, GW is the largest institution of higher education in the District of Columbia, with more than 20,000 students hailing from all 50 states, the District and more than 130 countries. GW comprises three campuses—Foggy Bottom and Mount Vernon in Washington, D.C., and the Virginia Science and Technology Campus in Ashburn, Virginia—as well as several graduate education centers in the metropolitan area.

GW's Division of Information Technology (IT) works with students, faculty, staff, alumni and departments across the university to provide advanced technology solutions. From Internet and phone connections in offices and residence halls to software that supports admissions, online registration and other aspects of day-to-day business, the Division of IT keeps GW connected. The Division of IT supports more than 25,000 users across three major campuses, more than 120 buildings and two major data centers.

The key purposes of the Division of IT's strategic plan are to align the division with the university and to set the division's direction. The plan provides the division and the university with a forward-focused, aspirational road map for the Division of IT. The strategic planning process was designed to ensure that the Division of IT continues to provide high-quality, robust services and support to meet constituents' needs. The 2012 strategic plan prepares the Division of IT for a future of growth and success, and these tactics will position the Division as a university leader and a strong force in the field of higher education IT.

The Division of IT's 2011 strategic planning process was designed to build on the accomplishments of the past several years and on the organization's future goals to enable the Division of IT to serve as a strategic partner to the GW community. In developing its new strategic plan, the division sought participation from all levels of the organization. The principles and strategic themes that laid the foundation for the plan were gathered through collaborative discussions and engaging members of the Research and Instructional Technology Committee (RITC), the Administrative Information Technology Committee (AITC), the IT Executive Committee, the local support program (LSP), the Office of the Provost and other stakeholders across the university.

Several trends and core principles were used to drive the development of the plan. The core principles focus on improvements in people, technology and tools and processes. The trends include the consumerization[1] of IT in both the commercial marketplace and on GW's campuses and the need for standardization, commoditization and prioritization of IT investment.

During the onset of the strategic planning process, the Division of IT developed the following themes on which to build the foundation for the overall strategic plan.

1. Listen to Service users and Build Relationships in Order to Anticipate the Demand for Services ("Obtaining and Anticipating Demand")

2. Move Towards Being a Service Organization ("Meeting Demand")

3. Lower Operation Spending to Increase Enhancements and Upgrades ("Efficiently Performing in the Face of Demand")

4. Increase Organizational Agility ("Toolkit to Flex to the Demand")

5. Establish Continuous Professional Development ("Continuous Employability Emphasis")

6. Lead the Mobility Expectations for the University

This strategic plan is a living document that will continuously evolve with the needs of the university and the Division of IT. The plan will be reviewed every quarter by the Division of IT senior staff, and the division will seek input from staff at quarterly managers' meetings and Coffee and Conversation with the CIO and Deputy CIO meetings (see Appendix A). The plan will be made available to staff, university stakeholders and the user community, so that all may participate in the strategic planning process.

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[1] Consumerization is information technology's tendency to appear first in the consumer market and then extend into business organizations, resulting in a merge between the consumer electronics and IT industries and a shift in IT innovation

DIVISION OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY: OVERVIEW, MISSION, VISION AND VALUES

The Division of Information Technology is the primary provider of technology infrastructure, services, support and applications at The George Washington University. The Division of IT partners with stakeholders across the university to equip students, staff and faculty with the technology know-how and tools necessary to achieve academic excellence.

MISSION | The Division of IT promotes, advances and supports teaching, learning, research and administrative operations for the GW community by providing collaborative and innovative technology services and solutions.

VISION | A trusted partner and leader that facilitates and drives innovative technology services and solutions as GW emerges as a preeminent research institution and continues its tradition as a world-class university.

VALUES | Through our mission and vision, the Division of IT adopts and practices the university's values: learning, communication, community, diversity, excellence, respect, service, sustainability and teamwork.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONTEXT

The Division of IT's senior staff conducted a SWOT analysis to determine the division's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. The team discussed these factors relative to the environment within the university and sought feedback from all levels of Division of IT staff.

Although there may be an overlap among some of the below SWOTs, this list forms the basis for a thoughtful discussion about the future of the Division of IT and technology at The George Washington University.

SWOT ANALYSIS

STRENGTHS

- Ability to meet the day-to-day information technology needs of the university community
- Knowledge and expertise with enterprise-level data and systems
- Advancements to the division's data centers and progress in its virtualization efforts
- Upgrades and expansions in the GW infrastructure as well as high security standards
- Robust, resilient and scalable systems with high availability
- Expanded support services under which the university community can now access technical support 24 hours a day, seven days a week year-round

WEAKNESSES

- A history of being reactive rather than proactive
- A need to become more agile and flexible as an organization
- A need for more defined ownership of systems
- A need for an overall skills assessment in order to determine whether the division has skills in the right areas that align with future needs
- A need for increased visibility regarding the decision-making process
- A lack of standardization with processes and programs across both the division and the university
- A majority of workforce that is separated geographically from its constituents and stakeholders
- Missing a methodology and ability to calculate total cost of ownership for services

OPPORTUNITIES

- Advancements in cloud technology allows us to recapture focus on value added activities to support the University's mission
- Advancements in mobility resulting in enhanced opportunities to leverage local and remote professional talent
- Emerging mobile technologies and opportunities, particularly regarding student services
- Growth of the division's professional development program
- A university leadership team with a strong understanding of technology
- Opportunities for supporting research administration and enabling research
- Opportunities for improving academic services
- Consolidating services and reallocating end-of-life technologies
- Eliminating the chargeback budget model to improve external relationships and build trust across the university
- Embracing the trend of consumerization of IT
- Leveraging GW's governance structure and defining the division's role
- Standardization and automation

THREATS

- Failing to act on opportunities
- Past perceptions of the division
- The need to protect data due to increased regulations and security breach opportunities
- A need for knowledgeable and skilled staff to meet future challenges and prevent staff turnover and retention of skilled staff
- The presence of technologies unfamiliar to the division
- A number of legacy systems and a tendency to create problems such as complex and over-engineered solutions
- Resistance to changes in IT and obsolete business practices

TRENDS AND STRATEGIC THEMES

The Division of IT aims to understand and leverage the current and anticipated technology trends in order to maximize opportunities for growth and development. These trends create core principles that span across our strategic themes to shape and guide how we do our work (see Appendix B for relationship diagram).

TRENDS:

- **Consumerization of IT**
  New and transformative technologies available in the commercial and consumer marketplaces are growing. Students, faculty and staff are active consumers and bring to campus the expectation that the university can support these new technologies. As it looks forward, the Division of IT must acknowledge this rapidly changing environment and overcome the fact that the pace of adoption exceeds the acceptance rate for most enterprise; while finding a way to leverage these new technologies to improve the academic successes and experiences of the community.

- **Need for standardization, commoditization and prioritization of IT investment**
  The University continues to be challenged to achieve operational effectiveness while using resources efficiently to leverage this unique time of opportunity. The Division of IT must continue to explore and deploy new scalable service delivery models and utilize the governance structures that support and facilitate thoughtful and intentional investment decisions for new and existing systems and applications.

  Generally, the ideas of consumerization of IT and standardization tend to be in conflict with one another. As more "things" are supported by an organization, the complexity in the overall environment becomes greater, leading to a necessity for more IT resources to support and maintain them. This increased complexity can lead to more potential problems and longer problem resolution times. Conversely, standardization simplifies the IT environment, reduces complexity and reduces the number of "things" that need to be supported. This simplification leads to less need for IT resources and improved quality and productivity. Moving forward, the Division of IT will need to find the best way to blend these conflicting themes together in order to effectively support an increasing number of "things" driven by consumer technology while standardizing service delivery. In order to successfully do this, it will be necessary to be highly aware of each trend while considering the other and seek to provide a service.

CORE PRINCIPLES:

1. **People**
   The Division of IT will continually assess and anticipate the needs of the university and act as change agents through developing, retraining and reforming the organizational structure to ensure that the right resources are available and the right people are tasked with the right jobs.

2. **Technology and Tools**
   The Division of IT will emphasize and advance systems and applications that can be deployed to enable change and continuous improvement in the learning, teaching, development, research and administration areas to ensure that the right tools are available to get the job done well.

3. **Process**
   The Division of IT will develop policies and process improvements that align with industry best practices by introducing and enforcing efficient, standardized practices, processes and collaborative governance.

1

LISTEN TO SERVICE USERS AND BUILD RELATIONSHIPS IN ORDER TO ANTICIPATE THE DEMAND FOR SERVICES

"Obtaining and Anticipating Demand"

The university's expanded use of technology and the growth of its footprint increases the demand for advanced technology capabilities and services. As the university's information technology organization, the Division of IT is committed to listening to stakeholders and maximizing the value of technology services delivery and information resources in this dynamic environment. Building relationships with our constituents allows for the creation of a collaborative environment that engages stakeholders in the life of the university and the Division of IT and allows us to determine and anticipate users' demands and the technology services and tools they need in order to be successful. It is crucial to expand and improve communication efforts to make Division of IT communications available to stakeholders across the university and students, faculty, staff and alumni. We must engage university partners and leaders to identify effective strategies and encourage collaboration in order to address the needs of our university community. In order to achieve this, the Division of Information Technology will:

UNDERSTAND THE EXPERIENCE OF OUR SERVICE USERS

- *Establish and maintain a persistent presence in the GW community.*

- *Create focus groups to define our user list.*

- *Build a relationship portfolio with clear owners and roadmaps .*

- *Identify and implement ways to gather information from prospective stakeholders in order to better anticipate demand for services (see Appendix C)*

IMPROVE FEEDBACK PROCESSES AND PRACTICES

- *Make our strategic plan, services and projects accessible to our stakeholders and service users and solicit their input.*

- *Revitalize the Local Support Program (LSP) to increase alignment with technical support teams and allow for improved communications and knowledge sharing across the university.*

- *Combine and streamline IT demand requests through one unit of analysts to work with constituents to gather and refine requirements.*

- *Provide increased opportunities for our service users to offer feedback.*

2

MOVE TOWARDS BEING A SERVICE ORGANIZATION

"Effectively Meeting Demand"

The Division of IT will continue to explore and implement innovative and collaborative technology services and support for the university community. Rapid changes in information technology and the increasing demands of users of technology require a responsive and dependable service function that allows the GW community to effectively access and use the technology tools and services that have been placed at their disposal. Critical to meeting these demands is a robust, effective and user-focused technology support atmosphere, which can be leveraged to optimize the support experience, improving response time and communication and decreasing ambiguity. Complimenting this atmosphere, we will acknowledge and promote a self-sufficiency support model. In order to accomplish this, the Division of IT will:

DEFINE AND PROMOTE OUR SERVICES

- *Create a service portfolio that will define and categorize the Division of IT's services and include a service pipeline and the processes for on-boarding and off-boarding services (see Appendix D).*

- *Communicate the division's service offerings and promote the IT Support Center as the central, 24-hour technology support office for the GW community.*

- *Create proactive methodology to address service issues and the ability to process service requests.*

IMPROVE TRAINING AND OUTREACH

- *Set a service standard of excellence with the division and close service gaps.*

- *Enhance and expand communication efforts to make IT-related planning, decision-making and project status information readily available to university stakeholders and community members.*

3

LOWER OPERATION SPENDING TO INCREASE ENHANCEMENTS AND UPGRADES

"Efficiently Meeting Demand"

It is essential to reduce operational resource expenditures through strategic partnerships, standardization and process implementation in order to allow for increased innovation and project spending. Operational spending must be aligned with industry best practices, which will allow the Division of IT to maintain day-to-day operation resources more efficiently while making room for new initiatives and enhancements. In order to accomplish this, the Division of IT will:

STANDARDIZE

- *Achieve standardization of systems, operations and processes by eliminating redundant systems, identifying and off-boarding old and unused systems and defining technology architecture, change management, contract and procurement standards.*

- *Develop business models based on cost, risk and user impact data to align investment with delivered value.*

- *Utilize the Service Portfolio's pipeline of service requests and the Project Management Lifecycle (PMLC) process to determine the optimal mix and prioritization of proposed projects to best achieve the division's and the university's goals while honoring internal and external constraints.*

- *Leverage and enforce automation and electronic workflows for established processes where applicable.*

- *Establish a continuous improvement practice to review operational processes in all areas within the Division to identify inefficiencies and to make recommendations for improvements.*

- *Educate staff on standardized processes and enforce accountability to the processes.*

DEVELOP STANDARDIZED PLATFORMS FOR SERVICES

- *Define standard platforms and operations to be able to quickly deploy and operate services.*

- *Identify costs associated with each platform to develop cost of services provided.*

4

INCREASE ORGANIZATIONAL AGILITY

"Responding Quickly to Demand"

The Division of IT must be able to sense opportunities and/or threats, prioritize its potential response and act effectively and efficiently. Change is perpetual, and the division will make routine change a part of its culture to leverage emerging opportunities. To accomplish this, the Division of IT will:

PARTNER INTERNALLY AND EXTERNALLY

- *Actively listening to emerging needs, meeting with key university stakeholders to determine future direction and preparing to meet the community's needs.*

- *Identify innovation partners across the university where relationships have already been developed so that we can achieve rapid results and demonstrate new capabilities.*

- *Seek external partners to as resources for service support at reduced risk and cost.*

IMPROVE PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE

- *Continue to encourage an internal culture change from one of fear and risk aversion to one of openness, trust, learning and calculated risk.*

- *Identify a team that will rapidly envision and prototype proof-of-concept solutions.*

- *Continuously evaluate and improve internal processes to reduce bureaucracy and improve service delivery.*

5

ESTABLISH CONTINUOUS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

"Developing Resources to Meet Demand"

Our talented staff members are the division's number one asset, and continuing to enhance their training and knowledge is essential to the success of the Division of IT. Providing our staff with further education and training opportunities, among other benefits, will continue to promote GW as an employer of choice for IT professionals and allow us to attract and retain the most eligible, intelligent and inventive IT talent possible. To accomplish this, the division will:

INVEST IN TRAINING AND GROWTH

- *Continue to invest in our staff through implementing ongoing development and growth and involving the management team in creating and facilitating professional development opportunities.*

- *Reinvest in our staff to align with current and future initiatives and enable the Division of IT to transform with new technology.*

- *Leverage knowledge experts across the division with basic skill cross-training.*

- *Establish a Division of IT curriculum for all employees to ensure common fundamentals skills and terminologies critical to the cohesiveness of the Division.*

TRACK STAFF PROGRESS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- *Create a central database for skills and certifications.*

- *Evaluate how staff members' skills are being utilized and ensure certifications are current and relevant.*

IMPROVE RECOGNITION AND ADVANCEMENT PROGRAMS

- *Partner with Human Resources to build a career ladder program and compensation model.*

- *Promote mentorship to ensure employability both at the university and elsewhere.*

6

LEAD THE MOBILITY EXPECTATIONS FOR THE UNIVERSITY

"Proactively Leveraging Demand"

To advance mobility at The George Washington University, we must proceed by focusing less on devices and more on content. Mobile technologies are rapidly advancing, and our users expect the technology tools and services at the university to support their needs as well as rival and even outperform those of peer institutions. Moving forward, the Division of IT must recognize the challenges of today's constantly changing technology environment and leverage new technologies to establish GW as a mobility leader. To accomplish this, the division will:

IMPROVE MOBILE ACCESS

- *Develop a data architecture in which the right person has access to the right information at the right time, with a modular system that is simple and supportable.*

- *Advance identity management capabilities to be more granular so that network access, information access and identity management privileges are ubiquitous and simple.*

ENGAGE IN OUTREACH

- *Move to protecting data at the source, rather than at the device level, to shift from end-point control and create access through standards.*

- *Enhance the infrastructure to be more mobile-ready to meet the current needs and future expectations of the GW community.*

CONCLUSION

This strategic plan provides the Division of IT's strategic partners and constituents and the rest of the GW community an overview of who the Division of IT is, the work it does and the goals by which the division defines itself. It highlights where both the division and the university stand today in terms of technology, and it articulates the Division of IT's mission and vision as well as its core principles and the six strategic themes on which the division must focus in order to achieve these goals.

In order to successfully engage this plan, the Division of IT will need to continually make plans, assess its progress and evaluate prioritization in relation to resource availability and growth. Through integrated planning and budgeting, the Division of IT will be able to focus on these strategic themes and core principles and leverage them to achieve excellence in the Division of IT and The George Washington University.

This plan does not detail everything that the Division of IT hopes to accomplish over the next several years, and it is not meant to be an absolute, fixed set of strategies, since the process of strategic planning is necessarily dynamic and continuous. However, this plan serves as the framework by which the Division of IT will govern itself and make decisions regarding the future of the division and the services and support it provides, thereby helping to advance The George Washington University's status as a leader in higher education IT.
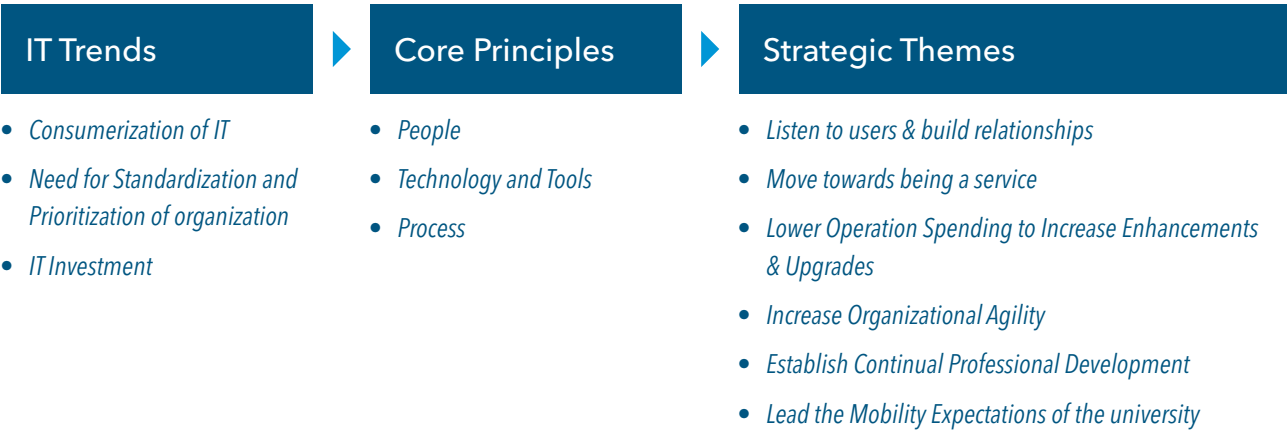
THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

Appendix

APPENDIX A

The Division of IT holds quarterly Coffee and Conversation with the CIO and Deputy CIO events and managers' meetings, which provide employees with a forum to ask unedited questions to the division's highest leadership members. These meetings do not have a set agenda and are opportunities for staff to articulate their ideas and questions and engage in open dialogue at all levels of the organization.

APPENDIX B

Trends, core principles and strategic themes relationship diagram

IT Trends	▶	Core Principles	▶	Strategic Themes

- *Consumerization of IT*
- *Need for Standardization and Prioritization of organization*
- *IT Investment*

- *People*
- *Technology and Tools*
- *Process*

- *Listen to users & build relationships*
- *Move towards being a service*
- *Lower Operation Spending to Increase Enhancements & Upgrades*
- *Increase Organizational Agility*
- *Establish Continual Professional Development*
- *Lead the Mobility Expectations of the university*

APPENDIX C

The George Washington University, and the higher education industry in general, is uniquely positioned with regard to understanding and anticipating stakeholder demand, due to knowing who service users will be before they actually become service users. The Division of IT can use this knowledge to its advantage and find ways to gather intelligence about future constituents from the sources themselves. Some of these ways to gather information include interviewing or holding round-table discussions with prospective students to gain insight on their technology needs, expectations and habits.

APPENDIX D

In order to successfully implement a service, it is often helpful to consider the realistic, useful life of the service as a final consideration before putting it into use. It would benefit the Division of IT to review the potential retirement of services before making them available to the GW community, including setting tentative future dates for the retirement, replacement or upgrade of services before putting them into use.